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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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JACK DOYLE'S DAUGHTER.

BY R. E. FRANKILLON.

PART II. PHOEBE'S FATHERS.

CHAPTER II. PHILIP NELSON.

A SUDDEN plunge from the warm bed where we have been dreaming all sorts of vague, intangible fancies—all the more luxurious for their being so completely beyond the reach of sense or reason—into the biting reality of a half-frozen bath on a winter morning, is nothing to the sensation of having the first warmth of one's first romance subjected to such an unpromising shower-bath as Philip Nelson's treatment of Phoebe's back-garden flirtation. She was not in love with Stanislas, nor had he, until that evening, suggested the possibility of his regarding her as anything more or better than a sympathetic audience, such as every poet and orator requires. But this evening there had been a tender something in the patriot's manner, suggestive of the possibilities of her becoming a living heroine to a living hero. Nor had she noticed the sudden access of enthusiasm and the deepening of tenderness which had followed his learning that the money from India, four times a year, was a great deal. For that matter, few women could associate the idea of money with Stanislas Adrianski, or him with it, either as desirer or possessor. If he had put money before Poland, he could have had it; and that he had it not, everything about him plainly declared.

Philip Nelson's whole conduct, therefore, had been no less unjust than vulgar, and Phoebe could not enough admire the delicacy of the Pole in avoiding a quarrel in the presence of a woman. She was angry with Philip, and all the more for

being unable to help being rather afraid of him. He was the only one of her family of whom she was ever afraid; and she was only too ready, since she had started a romance, to give him the necessary part of villain. And, for that matter, the young man looked fierce and sullen enough to suit the most exigent of heroines, as he marched before her into the house, and bade her follow him.

The interior in which Phoebe had grown up was humble enough, and, being free from every sort of feminine intrusion except her own, was also a rough and ugly one. No wonder she was fond of the back garden, and no wonder that she drew an altogether one-sided contrast between out-of-doors and in-doors on this particular evening. Philip Nelson—her brother and yet not her brother—was as unlike Stanislas as one young man can possibly be unlike another. Nobody could dream of making Philip a peg to hang any least rag of romance upon, although, by many eyes, he would be held the better-looking of the two, if only because he was cleaner and more wholesome. That was more than could be said of the Nelsons' parlour, which, though in a girl's charge, did not strike the senses as being either wholesome or clean. But then it had been the common room of a whole herd of rough motherless boys. And what were one girl's hands against so many? For that matter, as her memory only too justly brought up against him, Philip himself, though by far the least riotous of the whole herd, had been one of the most grievous sinners in the matter of litter. He had been that most uncomfortable and most incomprehensible of young men—a serious, steady, plodding worker in a house where nobody followed

his example any more than anybody had set it for him. He had one way, or rather fifty ingenious ways, as Phoebe knew to her cost, of leaving books, papers, and mysterious instruments in all sorts of inconvenient places, and of expecting to find them, perhaps three weeks afterwards, in the identical spot where he had left them. He was given to spend evenings at home, during which he smoked not over-fragrant pipes over the production of zig-zags, about which Phoebe used to feel that she could have designed far more elegant patterns without the pipe in a hundredth part of the time, and with no trouble at all.

"Phoebe," he began again, taking up a judicial attitude in front of the fireplace—"Phoebe, I want to know what all this means."

"What what means, Phil?" she asked, more innocently than she felt, as she began to clear the unsteady round table and to noisily set out the cups and plates for some kind of meal.

"Do be plain and outspoken. What do you mean by letting a stranger—and such a stranger!—ask you questions about your affairs?"

"I can't help people asking questions," said she.

"I don't know about that. I suppose a man doesn't ask questions unless he expects an answer? How long have you known this fellow—what's his name?"

"Count Stanislas Adrianski?" Oh, I don't know. But why do you talk as if I had been committing some crime? Don't you choose your own friends?"

She was not speaking quite in the manner she would have wished; but it is not easy, without pens, ink, and paper, and an hour or two of preparation, to extemporise the style of a heroine of romance who is being bullied by a high-handed and unsympathetic brother. She felt that she was doing justice neither to herself nor to Stanislas Adrianski. But, always afraid of Phil, she was becoming conscious that she was afraid. In default of the right words and phrases, she was falling back upon the common feminine (and masculine) trick of confusing the issues.

But Phil was much too logical by nature to allow anything of that kind.

"I'm a man and you're a girl," said he. "I'm bound to take men as I come; but I don't ask them how much money they have a quarter. It won't do, Phoebe—it won't do."

"What won't do? And why?"

"Talking to fiddling foreign counts won't do. Picking up chance acquaintances won't do. Reading trash won't do. As for why—one can't tell a girl everything; a girl must trust her elders—"

"By three years? Yes, you are that much older, if I'm really as young as I'm told. But you're not old enough to be my grandfather, Phil, whoever he may have been. And I should say that Count Stanislas Adrianski is, at any rate, nearer my grandfather's age than you."

"Hang the fellow! As if I couldn't see through his sort with half an eye! There's something contemptible about the very sound of the fellow's name. It sounds as if he'd cribbed it from some East-end play. And he suits his name. If a fellow said to me what I said to him, I'd have knocked him down."

"You think you deserve to be knocked down? Perhaps the count didn't think it worth while."

Their eyes suddenly met. And, as suddenly, the young man and the young woman who had grown up together from childhood felt that they had been strangers until then. Her fear of him began to change into a curious certainty that this very plain-spoken young man was neither saying what he meant, nor speaking as he wished to speak—some hidden imp was telling her that to dwell upon the name of Count Stanislas Adrianski at full length, and with its title, was a sure way of punishing him badly for his interference; and this not because the name or title struck him as really contemptible, but rather the other way. And as for him; what was it that had come to Phoebe that she should show such hitherto unsuspected capacity for being sharp and bitter? He was not thin-skinned; but this was a stab from a needle, which easily pierces what can resist daggers.

But, though triumphing in her last stab, which she felt to be a good one—so good that her pleasure in giving it almost interfered with the careless ease which gives point to scorn—she repented of it almost as soon as it had been made. A flush and frown came over Phil Nelson's face that made her really afraid. It was a look of anger and pain together, of which his face seemed incapable by its very nature.

It was a dangerous moment for her, for it gave her a sense, not only of fear, but

of power. She had never seen him thus before, and she was beginning, by some new insight, to guess the cause. Was it possible that she, Phoebe Burden, had in one evening, and without leaving her own door, won the sympathetic interest of an exiled Polish nobleman and made another man downright jealous thereby? Here was the beginning of a real romance, indeed, even if it did no more than end where it began. She could fill up the rest at her leisure when she found herself alone again. No wonder that Phil Nelson aroused a new interest in her, just as a real stranger would have done. Even the fear was a pleasant thing to feel, as soon as it fairly took its place as a line in the web that her head was weaving. It was Phoebe's first taste of the pleasures of the coquette; and they had a bewildering charm. She took it for romance, just as she had taken Stanislas Adrianski for a hero.

Perhaps she was right. Women consider themselves to be born with—as a gift from Nature to them, and to them alone—an infallible instinct wherewith to understand themselves and men too. And who ought to know better than they? But meanwhile, thanks to Stanislas Adrianski and other back-garden fancies, it was beginning to look as if the brother, who was not a brother, were in a fair way of becoming sport to a girl who was not worth the distraction of his mind from the simplest geometrical problem. He looked likely to find harder problems than there are in geometry before he had done—harder to solve, and less worth solving, or more.

Both flush and frown, however, left his face almost as soon as they had come.

"It is enough to put a fellow into a rage," he said, almost humbly, as if he were in some sort begging her pardon. "I'd come home with some good news that I wanted you to know before anybody else; and I will tell it you first, all the same. Only—please tell me, Phoebe, right out, that there's nothing more than common neighbourly acquaintance between you and that fiddling scarecrow. Of course I know there isn't, but—"

"But there is, Phil. There's a great deal more. I don't object to scarecrows from your point of view. I very much prefer them to the crows, who can do nothing but croak and make a disagreeable noise, and don't mind their own business, and are generally troublesome. I have the greatest admiration for Stanislas Adrianski

—for Count Stanislas Adrianski, I should say. It is something to have become a scarecrow, and a fiddler, and—I forget what else you called him—for the sake of his country. Would you become a fiddler and a scarecrow for the sake of yours?"

"Certainly not!" said Phil. "Nor would anybody with a country worth mentioning. That's all humbug, Phoebe. If a man wants to serve his country, let him work for her, or fight for her; you can't do her a pennyworth of good by loafing about with your hands in your pockets, and telling women what a fine fellow you are. They believe you, of course, and you may end in serving one of your countrymen by picking up one of them with a few more pounds than brains. If he was a barrel-organ man I wouldn't mind; he'd be in his right place, and ask you for your pence honestly. But—well, that isn't what I've got to say. Give me your word, Phoebe, that you'll have nothing to say to—well, Count—I won't venture on his name. Give me your word on that, and you shall never hear of him again from me."

This began to sound delightfully like tyranny. She had been so little ruled that it would have been almost a pleasure to submit, if only for the sake of the novelty of the thing; and perhaps, if he had known a little better how such matters are to be managed, he would have got his own way at one big stroke, and have kept it for ever after. But he did not know. And so, for want of just the right word, or perhaps only the right look, at the right moment, her mood suddenly changed, and she broke into a laugh which took even herself so much by surprise that she let a teacup fall and break on the floor.

"Oh Phil, what nonsense! Why, father himself would be the first to laugh at such an idea. As if I could sit in the house all day long for fear I should be spoken to over the wall! It's like what one reads about nunneries, and girls in Spain; and from what I've read, they're not content to keep on their own side of the wall. I am."

"H'm! But the count can climb, I suppose, as well as you? Well, if he does, I shall know how to tackle him. But as to you—you won't give me your word?"

"It would be too silly. But I'll give you my word not to ask him to run away with me, though that wouldn't be bad fun."

"He might ask you to run away with him."

"Well, perhaps he will. Who knows? But he couldn't do it if I said No."

"But—you would say No?"

"Phil! How can I tell? I should rather like to be a countess, and——"

"Don't turn a serious thing into a joke, anyhow. It is a serious thing. Here are you, all alone all day long, with nobody to look after you, and a strange foreigner, who's most likely a scamp, with nothing to do but hang round you. I wish mother was alive. I'm not even your brother, Phoebe. I've no business to order you. But it's my business to tell you what's right and what's wrong, and to keep scamps out of the road."

"Why?"

"As if you didn't know that as well as I!"

"But I don't know it, indeed."

"You don't even want to know," he said, rather savagely. "Perhaps, if I was a count or a marquis—thank Heaven, I'm only an engineer!—perhaps you would care then."

"If you were a duke, still more. How do I know that I'm not a duchess myself, Phil? I do begin to think I must be somebody, and Count Stanislas Adrianski says he's sure."

"How much more stuff has he been saying to you? I—I can only hope you're joking, Phoebe. If you knew how you're hurting me, when I meant——"

"You don't know who I am. Father doesn't know. I don't know. How do you know that I mayn't be a long-lost queen?"

"I'll put an end to this, anyhow. . . I—I don't suppose for a minute you're anything above us, if one man can be called above another till he makes himself so. Fine ladies don't get lost in Gray's Inn Garden. Poor people's babies get lost anyhow and anywhere; and as for me—I don't care. If you turned out a duchess, you'd be plain Phoebe Burden to me all my days. I want to keep you good and safe—that's all; and I believe I can do that as well as a duke, and better. . . I've just got the chance I've been working and waiting for. The firm has asked me to go out and take charge of part of a line we're going to construct in Russia. It's a big thing for me—a thing that older and better men would give one of their ears for. So it's an honour, too; but it makes me able to ask you something that I've been wanting ever since I was eighteen. I shall come back with money, and if I do my work well, I shall have my foot well

on the ladder. It oughtn't to be long before I'm able to relieve father from—well, from work, and to help all the boys, and to live my own life, too; but I shall be away, you see, all the time, and—— Of course I can't go on, all that way off, without being certain about things. Just say one plain word, out of your heart, Phoebe. I want to work and live for you. Am I to, or——"

Phoebe could only open her eyes at him—they were large by nature—in sheer, downright, honest amaze. She knew he was angry and jealous, and that she was the cause; but this was a very different kind of thing. She very nearly let another teacup fall.

Here she had been, growing up into young womanhood and young manhood with Phil, the heaviest and gravest of the whole household, and had fancied him married to zigzags, whereas, as he now declared, he had been seeing her face in their contortions and dislocations for years!

Well, perhaps it is as easy to see a real girl's face in Asymptotes and Parabolas as to find a romance hanging on a clothes-line. She was only too quick at fancies when they did not touch her heart, and something of the sort came into her mind in a vague way, that half touched her, and half made her smile.

But this wanted all that she wanted—she, fresh from her first half-tender talk with a Hero and a Martyr; whereas Phil had asked her to marry him, in the clumsiest and most unromantic manner, by way of a sort of episode in a scolding.

To marry Phil! Only the strangeness of the notion saved it from being downright absurd. How could she dream of herself as the wife of a man whom she had always, even while half fearing him, looked down upon as a brother, and who spoke insultingly of heroic causes and of the heroes who gave up all things for them, and made the question of marriage itself turn upon ways and means?

He had not even said one tender word to her; had not even told her that he loved her. Tenderness had come into his voice, and love into his eyes; but that was not the way.

He saw her surprise, and was surprised. It did not occur to him that his one thought for years might possibly seem new to anybody else in the world. He knew he had been speaking awkwardly and terribly out of season.

As he came home from the office, full of hope and of his new good fortune, he had been painting, in his lover's fancy, a very different scene. He would find her alone, and would share with her his feast of honour and success till the feast should not fail to have a yet sweeter end.

Nobody will be much amazed to find a plodding, practical, prosaic, slow-minded man in love with a girl like Phoebe, rather than with one of his own kind. It was likely enough that he had learned to care for her because of her faults and follies, and by dint of for ever finding fault with them. But his surprise at her surprise was certainly a little surprising.

"Do you want to think of it?" he asked slowly, but anxiously. "You know I never can say half what I want to—but—will you be my wife when I come home? And—and—now, Phoebe, do you know why I want to keep you out of harm's way?"

"I—oh Phil, indeed I hardly know what you mean! No—indeed it can't be. I should never make a wife—for you. Please, Phil—pray don't think of such a thing any more. I'm so glad you've got what you want. I'm so sorry you're going away. But—"

"No?" For Heaven's sake, Phoebe—"

"No, Phil. I suppose the shortest word's best—with you."

"Phoebe—for Heaven's sake," he said suddenly, "tell me it's not that confounded Pole that's in the way!"

It was the most idiotic speech he could have made—it made her feel the infinite distance that lay between her and Phil. And it sounded to her ears even a little insulting. It was again dragging her secret, unspoken, undefined romance into coarse light and vulgar air.

"Nothing's in the way but myself," said she, also with rather too much heat to be reassuring. But "No, Phil," she said again more gently. "That's all. That's my last word. There, don't look so angry!—here's father or some of the boys," she said, as a knock sounded at the street-door. "Father—he'll be so glad to hear of your good news!"

"It's not good news at all," said Phil. "It's bad news. I shall take it of course—for the sake of the others—but—I won't tell him now. . . . And," he said to himself, as he left the room so as to escape before the door opened, "it is that Pole. And to leave Phoebe to a cur like that, who won't even let out when a man insults him to his face before a woman—that shan't be."

Love, in Phil Nelson's case, was obviously quite consistent with a decidedly low opinion of the good sense and steadiness of the girl whom he wanted to marry. He had told himself that he would set himself to cure them, and he had tried: and he would not have loved her half so jealously, or so patiently, or so angrily, or so deeply, if she had lost the least of them.

LEVANTINE EARTHQUAKES.

Of all the destructive agencies at work in the world, there is not one which produces such dire effects in so short a time as an earthquake.

In a moment all confidence is swept away in the stability of the earth. With the ground rocking beneath the feet, and huge boulders rolling down the mountain-side, there appears to be no safety, even in the open country, away from the falling walls. To the ignorant is immediately suggested the end of the world, and the dull apathy of despair often robs persons of the energy which might otherwise have preserved their lives. The eruption of a volcano does not create such dread, for the stream of lava may be avoided, and the action is but local; whereas in an earthquake, death and destruction seem to reign everywhere. In the great calamity which happened not many months ago in Scio, the utter demoralisation of the people was one of the most striking features. The islanders seemed to have been stunned by the greatness of the calamity, and were incapable of taking the slightest action. Not until the "relief-parties" arrived from the different quarters was any attempt made to extricate those still living from beneath the ruins, and even then the co-operation of the islanders could only be obtained by threats.

At first they simply squatted on the ground, near the site of their villages, and just waited for what they thought was to be their end. Though they heard cries for succour issuing from those fearful tombs, it never seemed to enter their minds to try and help those buried under the ruins of their houses. When questioned by the relief-parties as to their wants, they would hardly answer, and for all reply as to the beginning and progress of the earthquake, could only point to the heaps of stones which represented their houses, and say: "We know nothing, but that we were there, and are now here."

The Greek peasantry are exceedingly superstitious, and they appear to have looked upon the earthquake as a judgment for their sins; and later on a circumstance connected with this idea roused them to action, where their own necessities and that of their suffering brethren had failed to do so. It would seem that a hermit, by the name of Parthenio, some few days previous to the earthquake, had been loud in his denunciations of the loose manner in which the islanders in general were keeping Lent, and of their sinful practice in working on feast-days. Threats of God's anger were freely used, so that when the fearful calamity came it seemed merely the fulfilment of the monk's prophetic warnings.

Parthenio's exhortations had given rise to much adverse criticism of the bishop's conduct. The people tried to excuse themselves by referring to the supposed shortcomings of their spiritual chief, and the bishop had come to be regarded as the "Jonah" who had brought upon them such a fearful trial.

To calm the growing excitement, the bishop had the monk arrested by the authorities and shipped off to Smyrna; but this measure only served to bring matters to a head.

The bishop's life was only saved by the timely despatch of a Turkish guard, which succeeded in getting him off to the man-of-war which the governor-general had made his temporary residence. The excitement was intense, and, but for the return of the monk, might have led to proceedings that would have added much to the suffering caused by the earthquake, for a message had been sent to Sadyk Pasha by the exasperated population to the effect that, unless Parthenio was brought back to the island within twenty-four hours, they would no longer recognise the Turkish authorities.

Humboldt tells us that dogs and swine are particularly affected during a period of earthquakes, and that in South America the crocodiles of the Orinoco, which ordinarily are quite dumb, leave the river at such times and crawl away into the forest, uttering sharp shrill cries.

In Scio it was observed that the fowls all flew shrieking into the trees, and that at the first shock horses in the stables, breaking their head-ropes, galloped away wildly into the open, snorting with terror. In these few pages I shall not attempt to detail the respective damage or loss of life

occasioned at each village, the object in view being more to relate the general features of the earthquake at Scio, and to connect it with preceding phenomena of a similar nature in the same quarter of the Mediterranean. It will be as well, perhaps, to begin with a few words as to the nature of earthquakes, and the causes which tend to their production.

An earthquake is merely the transit of a wave or waves of elastic compression through the crust and surface of the earth. These waves, starting from what may be considered as the "origin of impulse," pass away in any direction from horizontally to vertically upwards. They are naturally influenced by circumstances as to the position of the "origin of impulse" in respect to sea or land, and the nature of the strata encountered in their passage, and thus may be accompanied by sound and tidal waves.

Whatever may be the immediate cause of an earthquake, it is necessarily either of the nature of a blow, or of the very sudden application, or withdrawal, of a powerful pressure. It is generally conceived to be due to some volcanic action, or the sudden upheaval or depression of a limited area, or the sudden fracture of bent and strained strata caused by the development of gas or steam. The "origin of impulse" may be deeply seated below the crust of the earth or near the surface, away inland or far out at sea.

The propagation of the force is chiefly in a linear direction, by undulations having a velocity of from twenty to twenty-eight miles per minute, but occasionally in circles or ellipses of motion from the centre upwards. As we shall see later on, the earthquake at Scio was characterised by both these classes of phenomena, and it is to this circumstance that the great destruction of property and loss of life is due. Earthquake shocks are sometimes propagated to enormous distances, and this is more especially the case where there are large tracts of alluvial soil.

In the present instance the shocks were confined to a comparatively limited area. Chesmeh, on the opposite side of the Chio channel, suffered considerably, eight hundred houses being destroyed and more than one hundred persons killed and wounded, but the farthest point reached by the wave transits in an eastern direction appears to have been Smyrna, which is not more than fifty miles from Scio. Away to the north, the

Dardanelles, one hundred and ten miles distant, would seem to have been the limit; for though it was afterwards declared that slight shocks were felt at Constantinople, the report was never confirmed, and no account of any earthquake movement has been received from Gallipoli or any of the towns on the Marmora shores. In the western direction, Syra, ninety miles away from Scio, marks the limit of the earthquake zone, and there the shocks were of no great violence. The mainland of Greece experienced none of the phenomena, and this was the case also with the islands lying to the southward of Samos. Two smart shocks, however, were experienced at this last-named place, which is situated some forty-five miles away from Scio in a S.E. direction. It would thus seem that the centre of all this disturbance must be looked for in the close neighbourhood of Scio itself, and that the waves of compression moved off in ellipses, like the ripples formed on the surface of placid water by throwing in a stone.

Earthquakes are frequently attended with noises like subterranean thunder, and sometimes the sound is heard over immense tracts of country. During the violent earthquake in New Granada in 1835, loud rumblings were heard at Popayan, Bogota, Santa Martha, and Caraccas, and on one occasion, whilst the crater of the volcano at St. Thomas was pouring forth a prodigious stream of lava, subterranean thunder was heard over a district in South America more than two thousand three hundred square miles in extent. These noises are by no means to be taken as indications of the intensity, duration, or frequency of the oscillations during an earthquake. In the terrible earthquake which destroyed the town of Riobamba in 1797, and brought death in a few seconds to some forty thousand persons, no such phenomena were observed in the immediate vicinity, though rumblings beneath the earth were heard, some twenty minutes after the catastrophe, at the cities of Quito and Ibarra. The fact is, these noises, so well described as subterranean thunder, are only to be heard when strata are fractured, or great masses of matter rent, or suddenly shifted, in contact with each other, and such action may occur by the propagation of the wave of force at distances far away from its origin. The noises are not, however, always like thunder; sometimes the sounds produced are like the clanking of chains,

at others they resemble the clear ringing of metals in contact, and occasionally they might be taken for the sharp detonations of exploding shells.

The oscillations at Scio were attended with a great deal of this subterranean noise. Sometimes the sounds preceded the movement in the earth, at other times they followed the tremblings, and occasionally they were without any sensible shaking of the crust taking place; generally speaking, they were of the nature last described, like bursting shells.

As earthquakes are generally ascribed to volcanic action, such phenomena in the popular mind are associated with countries where volcanoes exist. In reality, however, earthquake action occurs more frequently in localities where there are no burning mountains than where volcanoes are in full play. We see that here in the eastern part of the Levant and in Asia Minor. Within the last twenty-five years, not to mention the fearful destruction effected in Asia Minor by earthquakes in times more remote, we have had four great earthquakes — that of Broussa, in 1856; Mitylene, in 1867; Smyrna, last year; and now this one of Scio. In addition to these there have been minor affairs in which a few persons have lost their lives and some slight amount of property has been destroyed, as in the earthquake at Ismid, when the Fleet was lying at anchor in the Gulf, and yet we have no actual volcano within some eight hundred miles of what may be considered as the centre of this earthquake zone. There is, however, between earthquakes and volcanoes, a connection very similar to that which exists between electricity and magnetism. As with the last-named forces, the two former are both manifestations of the same great power of nature; and there is also between them a reciprocal action. Volcanoes may be looked upon as safety-valves for earthquake force. Whilst they are in action there is nothing to fear, but when the openings are closed, and there is no longer free communication between the crater and the interior of the earth, then approaches the danger of a great earthquake movement. As the impeded activity of volcanoes is productive of earthquake phenomena, so do the latter often give rise to volcanic manifestations. The openings of fissures in volcanic regions are favourable to the elevation of new cones of eruption. In some very rare cases they even lead to the creation of an entirely new volcano, as in the remarkable case of the

burning mountain of Jorullo, in Mexico, which on the 29th September, 1759, sprang suddenly into existence, elevating its crater to the height of one thousand six hundred and eighty-two English feet above the level of the plain on which it stands, after eighty days of continuous earthquakes and subterranean thunder.

Strabo, the celebrated Greek geographer, in his account of Asia Minor, states that tremblings of the ground which had long been felt all over Syria, in the Cyclades and the island Eubœa (now called Negropont), suddenly ceased when a stream of lava issued forth in the plains near Chalcis. In another passage the same author adds: "Since the craters of Etna have been opened through which fire issues, the lands near the shore have not been so often shaken as in the time when, previous to the separation of Sicily from lower Italy, all the openings were closed."

The earthquake at Scio evidently forms part of the same system of volcanic action which within so few years has brought about so much mischief at Broussa, Mitylene, Smyrna, and Ismid. The whole of this part of the Mediterranean, extending, we may say, from the shores of Greece to half way across Asia Minor, forms a great volcanic area, in which there is probably more than one focus of action. The Cyclades, with the neighbouring shores of Asia Minor, is the one section of this volcanic area where the action of late years has been most frequent. On examining the phenomena which have here taken place within the memory of the present generation, the reciprocal action previously described is clearly seen.

The island of Santorin is evidently intended by nature to be the safety-valve for this volcanic area; but, unfortunately for the present generation of Levantines, her work in the matter appears as yet not to be complete. Santorin is an island of volcanic eruption. It is situated immediately over one of the great centres where the mysterious and powerful forces which give rise to earthquakes and volcanoes are at work, and for more than two thousand years back, or as far as history and tradition enable us to trace, Nature has been endeavouring to elevate a permanent crater. The non-success may be owing to the very excessive violence of the agencies at work, succeeding convulsive throes destroying that which has been done by their predecessors. One hundred and thirty-seven years before the com-

mencement of our era, the island of Santorin (Thera) was separated from Therasia, and since that time, within the small circular bay, which marks the edge of a crater, cones of elevation have repeatedly risen above the waves only to disappear as suddenly, through some subsequent volcanic action.

It is a noteworthy fact that the great earthquake of Broussa was followed by an earthquake at Santorin which destroyed several houses and occasioned a few deaths. There was no eruptive action at the time, but ten years afterwards a volcanic outburst at Santorin was followed by a terrible earthquake at Mitylene. January, 1866, witnessed the commencement of eruptive action at Santorin which did not entirely cease until 1872. One of the small islands in the bay, known by the name of Kameni (burnt), suddenly disappeared, but shortly afterwards a new one rose from the waves, much larger in size, and from its centre vomited forth streams of burning lava. This volcanic action occasioned no earthquake movement at Santorin, but on the evening of the 7th of March, in the following year, took place the great convulsion which did so much mischief at Mitylene. It was as if the pent-up energies for which Nature had been struggling to create a vent at Santorin had suddenly broken bounds and sought an outlet in a new direction. This earthquake, in which more than one thousand persons were killed and over two thousand wounded, was distinctly a reaction of the disturbance at Santorin. The wave of compression had a northerly direction, as was shown by the shocks having been felt at the Dardanelles and Gallipoli a few minutes after they had done their work at Mitylene. After this great outburst at a distance, the eruptive action at Santorin gradually decreased in energy until, in 1870, the only volcanic signs to be observed about the island were the occasional emissions of steam from the crater; even these had ceased entirely by the end of 1872. In that same year a slight shock, not felt at Santorin, was experienced at Samos, and this may be looked upon as the termination of the disturbances for that period. For the next eight years the islands and shores of the *Ægean Sea* enjoyed complete repose. An earthquake disturbance, which occurred whilst our fleet was lying at Ismid, brought down a few rickety houses and a minaret or so; but there was no reaction elsewhere.

It would seem, however, that we shall have to regard last year as the beginning of a new period of earthquake convulsions. With no previous warning, on the morning of the 29th July, 1880, the vilayet of Aidin, in Asia Minor, was visited with a very severe succession of shocks. The town of Smyrna suffered considerably, as also the villages of the plain. The centre of the disturbance would appear to have been at the small town of Menemen, in the valley of the Hermus, for nearly the whole place was brought down, and several persons were killed and wounded. Here, as at Scio, the shocks were propagated in ellipses, the waves radiated, as it were, from "the origin of impulse."

A considerable area was affected on this occasion, the shocks extending as far as Constantinople in the one direction and Rhodes in the other. Both Mitylene and Chio were violently agitated, although the movements created no damage.

The effect on the alluvial soil near Menemen was very curious. Fissures were opened from which issued forth streams of sulphurous water, and it was probably due to this circumstance that succeeding shocks lost their intensity, and thus the town of Smyrna was saved from the destruction with which at one moment it appeared to be menaced.

Humboldt rather pooh-poohs the idea that earthquakes are preceded by calms, oppressive heat, and a misty horizon, basing his opinions upon observations and enquiry made in the volcanic districts of America. It is, however, a well-established fact that all the recent earthquakes in the Levant have taken place during exceptionally hot weather. This was particularly the case with the recent great outburst at Scio. On that mournful Sunday the whole atmosphere about that part of the Levant appeared to be in an abnormal condition. It was oppressively hot at Constantinople, as also at Salonica and Volo, on the western shore of the *Ægean*. The most perfect calm prevailed over all that region, not a movement being noticeable in either sea or air.

A witness of the terrible event states that the morning of the fatal third of April dawned at Scio with a very dull and heavy-looking sky. The heavens were hidden by a thick mist, clotted here and there with dark blotches of cloud. The temperature was very heavy and oppressive, and there was every appearance of a coming storm. Instead, however, of the aerial disturbance

with which the inhabitants considered themselves threatened, in one moment arrived a great terrestrial convulsion, overwhelming the whole island with great waves of dynamic force, carrying death and destruction everywhere. Judging from the effects produced, there can be no doubt that the seat of the mischief was situated immediately beneath the island, probably in the southern part overlooking Megalo Bay, and at a considerable distance below the surface. The shocks in this case would be propagated upwards in radiating circles or ellipses, and, according to the situation, the motion experienced would be more or less vertical as well as lateral. The eastern waves, meeting with no great resisting strata in the bed of the Scio channel, would strike directly upon the Chesmeh shore, and thus we may account for the severity of the shocks experienced at that place. The northern waves would encounter the mountain-ridges of the central part of the island, and, running along their eastern slopes, meet with resistance in the transverse spurs commencing at Mount Provato. These last, acting as barriers, would break, to a certain extent, the force of the earthquake, and thus, in a measure, protect the northern part of the island.

Keeping this theory in view, a glance may now be taken at the aspect of Scio immediately after the disaster.

The southern portion was where the earthquake had been most destructive. Here the villages had all been completely destroyed. Not a house was left standing. Nothing remained to mark the sites of what were once flourishing communities but huge heaps of stones.

The best possible idea can be formed of the ruins by imagining a child playing with its box of bricks to have built up a number of small houses, and then, in a moment of caprice, to have swept them all down with its hand. The village of Nenita, very near the locality I have assigned as containing the "origin of impulse," was so completely smashed up that it looked more like an old quarry than anything else. Out of its one thousand two hundred inhabitants, three hundred at least are known to have perished. The greatest loss of life, as might be expected from the large number of inhabitants, occurred at Kastro, the capital of the island. Kastro is situated on the shore of the channel between the island and Chesmeh, and to the south-eastward of the transverse spurs previously mentioned, and was thus well within the

area affected. Hardly a habitable dwelling was left in the whole place. The coping-stones had fallen, the roofs tumbled in, and the walls were cracked and split in various directions. The old castle, which contained within its walls the Jewish and Mussulman population, must have been built either upon made ground or on piles over a portion of the harbour, as the whole interior was nothing but a confused heap of stones, the houses having evidently succumbed to the withdrawal of their foundations.

The northern parts of the island were not very much affected, showing that the propagation of the waves in that direction must have been in some way or the other impeded. No fissures opened in the level ground, only along the slopes of the hills, and these, from their appearance, would seem to be due rather to earth-slippings than disruptive action. In the cracks observed in the walls still standing, as in these fissures, there was no one general direction that would indicate the passage of linear waves of force. The fissures invariably followed the course of the ranges, and the cracks were in accordance with the position and strength of the houses. Everything, in fact, points to the conclusion already drawn, that the "origin of impulse" was situated in the southern part of the island, and the waves of compression propagated in radiating ellipses.

From the people of the villages it is impossible to obtain any information worth having in respect to the character of the shocks; but only a combined upheaval and oscillating motion could possibly have made such wrecks of their houses within so short a time. At the sites of most of the villages destroyed one may climb upon one side of a great heap of stones and down the other without meeting with the slightest indications by which to trace the form or extent of a single house. At Kastro the first shock was undoubtedly a lateral oscillation coming from the south, which shook the houses to their foundations, and the next an upheaval that brought them to the ground. Fresh "impulses" were probably created by the fracture of strata in and about the transverse spurs of the central part of the island, and thus the character of the succeeding shocks at Kastro was changed.

On board of the ships at anchor the sensation was most peculiar. The shock appeared to run up the cable like an

electric current. A rumbling sound was heard under the bottom, and a strong vibration felt throughout the ship, much the same as would be produced by letting go the heaviest anchor in very deep water.

This earthquake differed materially in character from the great throes which convulsed at times the central parts of America and the shores of Chili and Peru. It was distinctly local in its action, as was also the earthquake at Smyrna last year—the efforts of nature to create new outlets, the old openings at Santorin having been closed up since 1870. It was reported that fire had been seen to issue from one of the mountaintops, and that a stream of bloodlike liquid was flowing from a fissure in the slope of another. No confirmation could be obtained of the first report, although enquiries were pushed in all directions, whilst the only foundation for the second was the discoloured water of a well into which a lot of red earth had fallen.

The rumoured change in the bed of the Scio channel is also false. It was reported that where forty-four fathoms formerly existed there are now only ten; but the sapient observer who started the report must have been casting his lead on the submarine ridge which connects Scio with the mainland, in ignorance, perhaps, of its existence.

Before closing, it will be as well to add a few words respecting the loss of life and the "relief work." It will be impossible ever to establish a correct statistical account of the killed and wounded, for the population of the island at the time is only roughly estimated, and the number of the people that fled in the first days of terror is unknown. Stripped as far as possible of exaggeration, the killed may be set down fairly at four thousand, and the wounded at eight hundred. The places where the greatest loss of life has occurred are Kastro, Calamatia, and Nenita. The dead at these places are set down respectively in official returns at five hundred, four hundred and forty-eight, and four hundred and fifty. In several of the villages, although the houses were completely destroyed, the loss of life was trifling, owing to the people having been outside, walking in the fields, or gossiping round the churches. Of the people actually in the houses at the time, very few but those on the ground-floor managed to escape, and most of these were severely injured. I have already spoken of the demoralisation

of the people. The lethargy and apathy into which they sank after the great catastrophe was remarkable. It was with the greatest difficulty that mules could be procured by the relief-parties for the transport of food and planks to the villages in the interior, the people not caring to bring the animals in from the fields, even when tempted by large offers of money payment; and the work of extricating the dead and living from the ruins, and bringing the wounded down to the coast, was done entirely by the sailors of the men-of-war. The gallant fellows of all nations vied with each other in the work of charity. Whilst committees were discussing ways and means, and drawing up minutes, the captains of the men-of-war held one meeting, at which it was decided at once that each ship should do her best, and away started the relief-parties, for the work was close at hand, and there was more than enough of it to tax the energies and resources of all. The Austrian despatch-boat was the first to arrive with a contingent of sisters of charity and deaconesses from Smyrna, whose valuable assistance has been appreciated by all. The American vessel Galena, the German despatch-boat Lorelei, the French vessels Bouvet and Voltigeur, all worked most energetically. Our own vessels, the Thunderer, Bittern, and Antelope, were fully employed. The two former went right round the island, landing search-parties at every village and distributing food and blankets. She brought from Malta nine hundred bell-tents, which were found most useful, for the great question of the moment was, how to house the people.

As far as the rebuilding of the villages is concerned, new sites will have to be chosen and a different style of construction adopted. As yet, the people are so terrified they will not think of anything but low wooden houses of one storey. Except for the destruction of the houses and the loss of life, the island has not suffered much. The orange, olive, mastic, and lemon groves are still as fresh and flourishing as ever. There have been no eruptions of deleterious substances to lay waste the soil and destroy the trees. When once the people have recovered their courage, and have rebuilt their houses, their industrial habits will be resumed, and in all probability a few years hence will find them in a fair way towards recovering the prosperity for which their island was proverbial.

IN THE SUNNY RHINELAND.

V.

THE guide-books say that there is nothing worth seeing on the Rhine between Cologne and Bonn, but they are wrong. The river itself is worth seeing with its gracious curves and wooded banks; and then there is the distant view of the seven mountains, very small affairs in the way of mountains certainly, but not to be despised on that account. There is a wicked varminty look about those seven mountains, their strange peaks and unfamiliar contours, worthy harbingers of a land of mystic wonders. It would not astonish you to hear strange stories about those seven mountains—stories of dismal mutterings and rumblings from the bosom of the earth, of a cloud that hangs over them by day, of a fiery glow at night. And if, instead of any such strange stories, we hear only the dim familiar legends of giants and dragons, we may, if we like, consider the strange forces of Nature as personified in these venerable myths, and trace the earthquake in the giant's footsteps, and the volcanic crater in the fiery dragon.

But the present is not the time for such far-fetched notions; the question of the moment is, are we to stop at Bonn? a question raised into urgency by the conductor of the steamboat, who insists upon the necessity of marking our tickets at once. The notion of people being actually unsettled as to their destination strikes him as irregular, not to say suspicious; and to awake the suspicions of a conductor is a somewhat serious matter; for he is an official who carries about with him a magisterial air, and demands tickets in a stern abrupt manner, as much as to say that he knows you have come on board in a deceitful way, and that he is not to be hoodwinked, and is determined to inflict the uttermost penalties of the law. Then his round-topped cap and gold band give him the appearance of a military provost-marshal, authorised, perhaps, to string recalcitrant passengers to the yard-arm.

Now we have booked right through to Mayence, but can get out when and where we please by giving notice to the conductor. And this notice our conductor—imposing semi-military semi-judicial figure—is now imperatively demanding. And so the question becomes urgent, shall we alight at Bonn?

"What is there to be seen?" asks Mrs.

John, and her husband dutifully consults the guide-book and reads out :

"Chief attractions : One. Exterior of the minster," which we can see from the river, no doubt, and which is otherwise a small one-horse affair.

"Go on, John."

"Attraction Two. Monument of Beethoven." Can be left to the imagination. The composer, in a Roman suit, which we could envy him this hot weather, sits in cool marble, with a pen in his hand, and looks heavenward for inspiration.

"Next attraction : Number Three. View from the Alte Toll." Better views higher up.

"Anything else ?"

"Attraction Four. Walk to Poppelsdorf."

This was decisive. The notion of staying at Bonn in order to walk to Poppelsdorf struck us as slightly absurd ; as if one proposed to visit London in order to walk to Putney. So Bonn was dismissed by acclamation.

For the rest, we are well satisfied with our present quarters ; we have secured a table on deck, where books and maps can rest undisturbed ; the motion of the vessel raises a pleasant breeze, and the scenery of the river is attractive without being engrossing.

John rejoices in the possession of a new machine for lighting cigars, a thing about the size of a cartridge-case, which pulls asunder with a slight fizz and discloses a lighted candle inside—that is, if everything goes well. In general, however, things don't go well ; it has to be poked about with a penknife, and carefully adjusted in various ways ; and the worst is, that before John has settled half the preliminaries, he finds two or three waiters about him, proffering lighted matches, besides sundry sympathetic Germans, who offer the incandescent tips of their cigars. Now this civility on the part of the waiters is due to an acquired habit of politeness, but with these others, who have no interest in John's welfare, and whose courtesy, in a general way, is of the most passive nature—whence this access of benevolence ?

Between ourselves, I think John owes these little attentions to his wife. Mrs. Parker creates a sensation ; her striking appearance attracts the eyes of all the male passengers, while even the officials of the vessel lose their sternness, and the conductor positively encourages delay in the matter of the tickets, that he may have an opportunity of gazing upon John's wife.

And there are no female passengers who can in any way compete with our English beauty, although there is one nice sweet little German mädchen who wins my heart before we arrive at Bonn. So fresh she is, so sweet with such enjoyment of all she sees with her good motherly-looking mother ; they twine their arms about each other's waists, and trip about all over the boat, examining everything with artless curiosity. There is a brother, too, not quite of military age, a cub who smokes incessantly, and hangs awkwardly about. It is a comfort to think that the drill-sergeant will have something to say to him presently. As for the Americans, they are all in the fore part of the boat, intent on seeing the first of everything, and marking off the points of interest most zealously. Perhaps they have the best of it, seeing the rush and swirl of the waters, and meeting the breeze. Then the captain stalks about the bridge, to which no passengers are admitted, while the steersman manipulates the horizontal wheel as if he were the croupier at a huge roulette-table.

There is one of those national differences that strike one with mild awe and wonder. Why should all the Rhine boats be steered with horizontal wheels ? And if it is good for the Rhine, why not for the Thames ? But then the Rhine rudders strike one with wonder generally. There is one, for instance, of which the Dutch are very fond, in which the tiller, a beam of considerable size, after passing the stern-post, takes a graceful curve in the air, and finally clasps the outer edge of the rudder ; and it is pleasing to see a sturdy brown-faced frau stick her slippers against a stanchion, and her back against the tiller, and ship the whole complicated machinery to starboard.

A clean white sunny town is Bonn, which commands our respect and esteem, but does not in any way win upon the affections. It has a pedagogal, preceptorial appearance, an arid educational aspect, in the lines of its white streets and prim groves. We are glad not to have to stop at Bonn, especially as the scenery improves as we get higher, the hills closing in about the river, while the seven mountains—they are not all visible indeed, but seem emphatically to assert, we are seven, in spite of temporary eclipse—stretch themselves out as if disposed to bar the passage altogether.

They don't impress with any notion of grandeur, seen close at hand. They have

not the noble outlines of a genuine mountain range.

An American, who remarks that they would call those elevations "bluffs" out West, stands unrebuked; and yet so rich is their colouring, so craggy the projecting rocks, and altogether so quaint and weird their general aspect, that it is impossible to sneer at them.

And we have made up our minds to stop among them, at the foot of the Drachenfels—everybody knows the Drachenfels—the name seems to embody all the romance of the Rhine.

"The castled crag of Drachenfels," began John's wife, and then stopped.

"Yes, ma'am," interposed the Yankee, "those are the words of the immortal Byron. I've got the poem here; shall I read it up for you?"

That cunning poet had been manoeuvring for some time to make acquaintance with our beauty; he was already on speaking terms with Madame Reimer, who was charmed with the American.

"They are English with all the ice melted out of them," she said.

However, John's wife negatived the poetry with more energy than was perhaps consistent with politeness, and the American, baffled, turned towards John.

"I conclude, sir, that you find yourself gratified with the opening beauties of this remarkable stream?"

"I daresay I might," replied John rather crustily, "if I were left to enjoy it in peace; but the thing has become so frightfully trite and crowded, swarming with cockneys and so on."

"Well, now," said the American, blandly, "I don't quite coincide with you there. Those crumbling rocks, sir, haven't crumbled a crumb the more for all the thousands of admiring gazes directed against them. Shall I disappreciate the beauties of Nature because myriads of my fellow-creatures can share in my enjoyment? No, sir; I am no monopolist of the gifts of heaven."

"That's because you don't happen to deal in them," growled John.

But he was put down by the united voices of his companions.

Madame Reimer declared it was very bad taste to prefer savage wilds to cultivated regions, with good hotels and plenty of company; and John's wife was decidedly of the same opinion.

By this time the steamer was making for the little pier of Königswinter, right under

the shadows of the Drachenfels, and we were presently installed in comfortable rooms looking over pleasant gardens, with a glimpse of the rushing Rhine. The Americans had landed also, but had gone to the other house.

"The table-d'hôte has only just commenced," said the courteous host, whose shirt-front was so stiff and spotless that it must surely have been iced; in no other way could it retain its character this broiling day.

"What do you say?" cried John.

But the ladies interposed a distinct negative.

"If you two begin table-d'hôteing," cried Mrs. John with her customary blunt sincerity, "we shall do nothing more with you for the rest of the day."

There was some truth in the young woman's remark, for those square meals in the middle of the day are a terrible check on enterprise, and we had got to go up the Drachenfels.

The only question now was, how should we get there?

Resolution, embodied in John's wife, said "Walk."

Madame Reimer directed a pathetic glance upwards, and gave one expressive little shrug. Yes, if her dear friend wished it, she would even walk to the top of the mountain.

And then I had to confess that I was a little lame. I had barked my shin getting hauled into the Rhine boat at Rotterdam, and the wound had not healed.

"We will put him on a donkey," cried Madam John, "and walk in procession after him, he with his flask of cognac under his arm, and we like jolly Bacchantes."

"Hush!" said John severely, his notions of propriety offended; "you don't know what you are talking about, Amy. We shall drive."

After all, that seemed the best way, and we presently chartered a not unhandy craft with an awning over it, and a pair of sturdy little horses at the pole.

The start was in a blaze of sunshine, through the village borderland, among stone-cutters' yards, and across the railway line and past straggling restaurants and untidy cabarets, till the hillside was reached, still in the blazing sunshine, but a hillside curiously seamed with little patches of cultivated ground of a prim formal appearance, like infant hop-gardens; and these are vineyards. And the strangeness of the scene is heightened by the appear-

ance of the men who are at work on these trim patches, with blue petticoats about their loins and brown wistful bearded faces, such as you may see in old missals, or perhaps in the drawings of Dürer.

The road is shaded now by cherry orchards and groves of walnuts, with glimpses of the vineyards between, and the bright river flashing in the sunshine. But presently we pass out of the vine-land into the woodland, through a charming shaded track, where the beech and the lime distil the sunshine into a soft emerald sheen, while the birds chirrup softly, and a kind of woodland glamour envelopes everything. And so on and upwards, till a glade opens out with a sudden vision of many-coloured hills, with their broad backs basking in the sunshine.

Whang! as if set in movement by a spring which we have touched at this precise spot. Whang! goes a huge accordion managed by some miscreant seated in the shade, whose little girl runs forward to levy backsheesh from the carriage, while the tune goes drawling on. I hope it is something appropriate; but John's wife, who is musical, declares it is *My Grandfather's Clock*, and has been rehearsed in honour of our nationality; and then the girl has oak-wreaths to sell, but Madam John insists on having a vine-wreath for me, in my Bacchic character, but can't get it, and all this time the accordion goes on whanging, and our coachman has drawn up, that the rites of backsheesh may be duly accomplished.

There was no more peace now. Presently a mob of German Arrys came charging down on horseback, all crowned with oak-leaves, laughing and singing. And then the carriage stopped at the door of an inn. We had reached the highest practicable point, and a vista of green tables, sprinkled with long-necked bottles, crowned the scene.

Well, after all, it is not a bad thing to be able to get a drink at these altitudes; had we walked we should probably have thrown ourselves on one of these green benches and called out lustily for beer; but why make the innkeeping business so conspicuous, and the whole thing, *Drachenfels*, Castle and everything, appear as nothing but an appendage to the refreshment-bar? Soon will every pleasant place in the world be farmed out to hotel-keepers, and the ubiquitous waiter will whisk his dinner-napkin, and suggest expensive refreshments, in every scene adorned by Nature or hallowed by tradition.

After all, there is a spot where restoration is not going on. The Government has interfered, and the black-and-white-striped pole, that symbolises State authority, is hoisted upon a walled terrace, where there are no suggestions of liquoring up. Just above rises the rugged peak of rock, a rich brown crumbling rock, crowned by the fragments of the castle keep, and there to the left stretches the great river plain, the Rhine a silver ribbon winding through. In the far horizon sparkle the lofty towers of Cologne cathedral, and towns and hamlets, lordly groves and humble village spires, spread like a network of human life over the plain. And where the hills gather in about the river, soft green islands seem to be sailing gently upwards, curbing the rushing stream, that loses itself presently among a maze of hills, a tumbled mass of green woodlands and speckled vineyards dotted with strange volcanic peaks. Everything is strangely silent, dogs bark, and cocks crow, and a child cries in a distant cottage; but these are sounds so familiar in a civilised country that the ear scarcely notes them. The flies buzzing in the hot sunshine are more vocal than all the peopled world below.

We have been sitting silent on the terrace for some time before this charming panorama; not that our feelings have overcome us, but that it is difficult to say anything appropriate.

John's wife breaks the silence by observing that she has a feeling that this is only a painted scene, and that she could poke a hole in the walls of that ruined castle with her sunshade.

Madame Reimer acknowledges her belief that the whole scene might be taken to pieces and packed away in a van.

"You have lived so long on illusions," says John severely, "that you are incapable of recognising truth and fact."

"But I truly declare," said the poet, who had just arrived upon the terrace, having walked up with his friend the drover—"I do truly declare this is the finest scene we have experienced while upon this track. There is expansion here, a view around of the widest nature. If a few of those bluffs could be removed to afford a freer range to the eye, the picture would be improved into perfection."

"Ah yes!" sighs Madame Reimer, "there is the feeling of the infinite here."

The poet bows with effusion.

"You may truly bet there is, ma'am," he

cries; "that expression of yours is real poetic."

It is too bad of Madame Reimer thus to expand her feelings before these strangers, while to us she shows only the prosaic side of her nature.

"In fact," cries the drover, who has been burning for an opportunity for speech, "the scene forcibly recalls to the spectator the beautiful lines of the poet Byron. I'll read 'em up if you don't mind;" and as the faithless Madame Reimer smiled sweetly upon him, he produced a book hastily from his pocket and began to read, in a nasal sing-song:

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of water broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine;
And scattered cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strew'd a scene which I should see
With double joy wert thou with me.

Samuel put a good deal of feeling into these last lines, with an expressive glance towards Madame Reimer.

"Well," cried the poet, "that last piece is tremendous. There's a touch of human nature in the words of a still more immortal bard, that 'makes the whole world kin.' You might hardly believe it, ma'am," addressing John's wife, "but in youth I devoted many sleepless hours to poetic composition."

Here Mrs. John gave my arm an ecstatic squeeze. "Was I not right?" she whispered. "I knew he was a poet."

"And, ma'am," continued the American, "one of the most admired of my pieces contained the following lines, suggested by a first visit to New York and the wonders of the Broadway, and addressed to the being who at that moment engrossed my affections:

Wert thou but here such sights to see,
How happy would thy Silas be!

"The words don't exactly correspond, but the immortal sentiment is there—the sentiment that beauty always excites in the manly bosom."

And Mrs. John laughs pleasantly at all this rubbish, and looks at the poet softly out of her great blue eyes. I don't know why I should be jealous—John isn't, and it is more his affair than mine—but I am horribly jealous. I should like to pitch that American poet from the castled crag into the middle of the Rhine below.

Roll up the panorama and let us depart. And soon we are grinding down the road,

all the breaks on, and the horses tugging against the pole in a way that suggests a happy somersault over the rocks, should anything give way. If a spice of danger gives a zest to pleasure, commend me to descending a mountain slope in a hired fly. The Americans cut in upon us by cunning by-paths at every turn, always with some facetious remark or poetic observation for the benefit of the ladies, and John's wife turns a deaf ear to everything I say, and smiles most graciously on the poet at every opportunity. Of course we shall get rid of them presently, but it is a poor spirit that is contented with the place in a woman's esteem due to mere propinquity or the accident of position. In fact, I gallantly propose to John that we shall ask the Americans to dinner.

"Why the deuce?" queries John in surprise; "mere casual acquaintances."

Mrs. John surveys me mischievously, apparently satisfied with her handiwork.

"Oh, don't let us have strangers," with an appeasing glance; "we shall be much jollier by ourselves."

It was very nice certainly, after washing away the dust and heat of the day, that "tea in the arbour," the swift Rhine glancing through the trelliswork. Statues gleam among the trees—only plaster casts, indeed, but they gleam just as famously as marble—birds twitter pleasantly, and Gretchen sings over her work hard by. The tea is strong and fragrant, and dispensed by a firm white hand that seems to add a zest to its flavour.

A noble dog of massive proportions that belongs to the house attaches himself to John's wife, and lies at her feet, lazily regarding her, valuing more a touch from the aforesaid white hand than all the blandishments of the rest of the world.

And so evening comes on, and stars shine out among the trees, and a soft breeze begins to blow, and the sounds from the village are redolent of rest and repose.

We stroll out upon the river bank and cheapen strawberries at the little fruit-stalls by the pier. Sage-looking boatmen accost us, and insinuate how pleasant a row on the river to Rolandseck and back, and how reasonable the terms. But we determine on a still more reasonable voyage, over the ferry that is, by the captive ferry-boat, a device for getting across the river that has intrigued us not a little all the way from Emmerich.

To see a fleet of boats in the glow of a

summer evening setting solemnly across the river all in a row, each boat tenanted by a black-and-white-striped post that seems to direct the movements of the craft—like the man of brass of the story of the Calendar son of a king in the Arabian Nights—excites a feeling of awe and wonder. It requires a little careful observation to find that the end and object of this stately boat march is simply to propel across the river a big heavy ferry barge. Given an anchor in the middle of the stream and a cable sustained by this long row of boats, and it will be seen that the ferry-boat at the end will vibrate to and fro like the bob of a pendulum, impelled by the rush of the current, without the aid of any artificial power. On this last point we have had sundry arguments; some of us contending that there is some paddle-wheel with hidden machinery that works the thing backwards and forwards; and this trial trip across the river is partly to settle the question. A bell rings, and the ferry-boat begins to swing slowly towards us from the other side of the water, and it is presently alongside, and made fast to the little landing-stage. There is on board a wooden erection that looks like a paddle-box, but careful scrutiny convinces us that there is no machinery inside; it is merely a cabin where people may shelter themselves in wet weather, and there is not an oar or sweep or paddle anywhere to be seen. The ferryman rings his bell, and people come on board; sundry peasants with baskets over their shoulders, women knitting industriously, and men smoking their big pipes. We sit in a row silently, while the ferryman hurries about full of business, casting off his moorings, winding up a chain here, and there paying one out. The result is that the head of the boat—which is, like the historic skye-terrier, undistinguishable head from stern, but in this case the head means the end that travels first—well, with the head being directed up-stream, the current swings us slowly away, and the ferryman, wiping his face, comes to collect his fares.

Just now the river is in full animation, a powerful tug is labouring slowly up with a fleet of heavy barges in tow, and whistles hoarsely a warning note; a passenger-steamer is coming full speed downwards, and sundry smaller craft are cruising about. Then there is a raft coming round the corner, slowly, but with irresistible force, and the feeling arises, how if our pen-

dulum arrangements come to grief, and the steamship walks over our attendant cock-boats while the big raft drags us under, chains and windlasses and all? But the ferryman is equal to the occasion. He slacks out everything except the head fastenings, and presently we are resting quietly in the middle of the stream, hanging to our moorings motionless, like a spider at the end of his line, while the big craft glide past on either hand.

It is cool and pleasant here, the western glow resting on the vineyard slopes, on the green woodland, and on the crumbling crags and timeworn ruined tower; and all things look more solemn and imposing from the water's level; the river assumes its due prominence, no longer an accessory merely to the landscape, but as the ruling spirit of the scene; a power that has conquered its way among the mountains, and called into being these busy human settlements. We are quite sorry when the ferryman winds us up into position, and we start on the swing again.

The farther bank reveals to us a pleasant shaded road, and a path along the river more than slightly gritty and painful to the feet. One can't expect here that intimate companionship with a big river, which may be enjoyed along the meadow-paths of a smaller stream; there are embankment works going on, and groins run out, and a general attitude of defence against the biting current, and to hear the lap of water against emerald banks is an enjoyment unattainable. But then you can always sit still and see the river go past, and a comfortable heap of stones under a hedge affords a convenient resting-place. John and his wife prefer to explore the shaded road, but Madame Reimer remains and begins to read. At the other end of the heap of stones is a little family group, a quiet-looking veteran solemnly smoking his big pipe, while children climb about his knee. The fair-haired frau sits beside him wearily resting, as if worn out with labour and care, while a sturdy young woman stands in front gossiping, knitting a spell now and then, and then dropping her work and placing her hands upon her hips, the more vigorously to enforce some assertion. A rude capstan, and the primitive landing-stage of the ferry, also occupy the immediate foreground, while the river, embayed by hills, assumes the appearance of a long narrow lake with wooded promontories, jutting out from which rise tall poplars breaking the sky-line. A cool grey

tint has settled upon the water, except where, beneath the crag, warm touches from the evening glow lurk among the shadows; soft hills bound the horizon, with strange conical peaks showing darkly behind, and at the foot of the hills a haze—the smoke of village fires, the mists that rise from tributary streams—a soft white haze that throws into relief the wooded banks of the river and the dwellings of the riparian people. The noisy steamers have passed away, but have left behind a huge painted barge with tall masts that has anchored by the bank; and the ferry-boat still pursues its pendulum swing.

I fancied that the thoughts of my companion were a little out of harmony with the scene, as she raised her dark eyes and surveyed it with a questioning dissatisfied air. I don't know why I should try to reconcile Madame Reimer to the German race, but it seems to be my mission.

"You ought to forgive them," I said with a sudden impulse. "Pardon me, dear Madame Reimer, but indeed you ought. Can't you sympathise with the genius of the race in this beautiful land of theirs?"

"My sympathies are not so easily won," replies Madame Reimer, frowning a little. "Can I forget my father dying a prisoner in their hands? And then, suppose, monsieur, that I tell you a morsel of my history? At sixteen, my father, the best of fathers, sought a husband for me. He was not forced upon me, but I chose him—a most charming young man, rich too, and of an honourable family from Alsace. The war intervened, Hector joined the army, then came my poor father's death, and after that the disastrous peace. I had at least my Hector left to me, I thought; and then came news——" Madame Reimer clasped her hands and turned her eyes to heaven.

"He was dead, then?"

"More bitter news than that—he had become a German! Great interests were involved, he wrote me; the fortunes of the family were at stake. The fortunes of the family! Mon Dieu, I would have welcomed him had he come to me without a sou; but with his hands full of money, and a German—jamais!" cried Madame Reimer; and she dashed her book to the ground, her teeth clenched, and her eyes dilated.

Certainly there is a considerable amount of prejudice to overcome here; but, after all, I do not despair.

THE QUESTION OF CAIN.

BY MRS. CASHIEL HOEY.

CHAPTER XXIV. CUTTING THE PAINTER.

"JANE," said Madame Morrison to her niece, two days after she had performed that duty which she had likened to a surgical operation, "I have just been thinking that, if this poor girl keeps to her resolution—and I believe she will—it would be a judicious precaution to mystify those Moreaus about where she is going to. I sincerely hope she will never hear more of Mr. Lisle; that would be so much the best way in which the matter could end."

"Oh aunt, do you think so? She will never get over it; she loves him."

"She thinks she loves him, my dear; but she is very young, and she knows nothing of life; and this is an affair of the fancy, not of the heart. When she realises what might have been her fate, she will get over the notion that this man was her gallant deliverer from a miserable life, and the building will fall with the caving-in of its foundations. If, however, her never hearing any more of him should prove too good to be true, the next best thing, and what we must secure, is that he should be forced to seek for a clue to her from Mr. Townley Gore. Now we cannot make sure of this, if anybody at the house at Neuilly can tell Mr. Lisle, or any person deputed by him, where it was she went to from that house. Therefore, these people must be carefully misinformed—a trompeur, trompeur et demi, is fair play you know; though I hope this is the only instance in which we shall have to act on that unpleasant principle. You will put those labels on Helen's trunks, and give the driver audible instructions to take you to the Gare du Nord. You must be careful about the hour; do not start too early or too late for the evening mail for England; these people will be sharp enough to notice it if you do, and as they would also be sharp enough to take the number of the carriage, you will actually have to drive to the station and allow the luggage to be taken in. Your uncle will meet you there, and bring you and Helen and the trunks safely away; there will be nothing surprising in a party of English people putting off their journey because one of the young ladies is not quite well."

"I understand you perfectly, aunt," said Jane, glancing at the labels, on which was written: "Mrs. Lisle, Passenger to Charing

Cross." "But I wonder whether Helen will see the necessity for this? She may be difficult to persuade that no clue should be given; for she must still hope."

"She will consent, my dear, and that is all we need care about, in reality. I have explained to her that she must be properly approached by this man, if at all, and she will understand that it is of vital importance to herself to have all communication with the few people who know anything about this episode in her life cut off. I am as anxious for this reason as for the other that these precautions should be taken; and we must resort to them under the strange necessity that we are placed in, to save this poor girl, to a certain extent, against her own will. Only think what a death's-head that Delphine might prove to her in the future, if she knew where to find her, and what the truth about her is! And now, I think you know all that is to be done, and I cannot give you any more time. My correspondence is very heavy this morning, and the letters are almost all such as I must answer myself. It is a little bit of a coincidence that one of them encloses a cheque from Mrs. Townley Gore; I conclude this will close her account with us; and another is an extensive order from Miss Chevenix, whom she introduced."

Jane did not attend to her aunt's final remarks; she was intent upon Helen; her imagination was busy with a fresh apprehension, awakened by what Madame Morrison had said respecting Delphine. Let the best that could come of this sad episode happen; let Helen be delivered from the thralldom of an imaginary love for an unworthy object, and saved from the consequences of her own ignorant imprudence; her life must still have in it the lurking danger of a secret, which it would be in the power of those persons of whom Jane entertained no good opinion, to disclose. She went about her ordinary business with her usual diligence indeed, but with her thoughts full of the coming hours.

Madame Morrison had not let the grass grow under those feet of hers that were swift to carry her in the ways of well-doing, and all that she had planned to do in the matter of Helen Rhodes had been accomplished. She had seen the landlord—a miserly old person, who wore gaiters and a greasy skull-cap, kept white mice in a cage, and lived in the topmost storey of one of his own houses—and ascertained that the rent of Helen's apartment had been paid for three months in advance, as

the concierge had stated. She had informed him that the apartment would be immediately vacated by Madame Lisle, and the astute old gentleman at once proposed to place it "en location," thereby getting the chance of a month's rent twice over; but Madame Morrison informed him that she had no power to make such an arrangement; Mr. Lisle might return any moment and require his domicile.

"But not the little lady! Hein! Aha, I see!" said the impertinent old wretch. Madame Morrison then addressed herself to the settlement of Helen's accounts, and found, as she expected, that the Moreau family had combined to cheat her in every one of the mean and small ways that were within their power. In this instance also she was helpless. And she even thought it wiser, under the circumstances, not to excite the anger of the pitiful delinquents, who were, as she readily discerned, full of curiosity. It was not until she had investigated every claim, and satisfied every demand, that Madame Morrison made known the impending departure of Madame Lisle. Then she directed Delphine to pack all her mistress's clothes and other property, to be ready for removal on the following day. By this time Delphine had been driven to the last point of exasperation by the cool authoritativeness of Madame Morrison and the gentle melancholy silence of Helen, and her customary discretion forsook her.

"Am I not to accompany madame?" she asked, with flashing eyes. "I was engaged by monsieur, and it is my right."

"You were paid by monsieur, I believe," replied Madame Morrison calmly, "and you have received a month's wages which you will not have to earn. Madame Lisle has no further occasion for your services."

"She has not told me so," said Delphine insolently, "and I have no orders to take from madame, whom I do not know."

"Madame Lisle will give you her own orders," said Madame Morrison with impassiveness that drove Delphine frantic.

"I shall then be free, and not obliged to await here the return of monsieur? For the rest, I do not expect him."

"You know on what terms M. Lisle engaged you," said Madame Morrison, "and the rest is entirely your own affair. You will have the goodness not to intrude it upon me."

With this, she left Delphine to her rage and her suspicions, and troubled herself no

more about her, except that the little scene suggested the final precautions which she impressed upon her niece. For to Jane had fallen the task of removing Helen from the place where she had tasted of the joys of her fool's paradise; where the first terrible knowledge and bitter experience of the meaning of life had come to her; where her girlhood had fled away into the background of memory, and she had become a woman, with the full capacity of womanhood for suffering, while much of the unreason of childhood abode with her still.

With true consideration and tact, Madame Morrison decided that this would be best done by Jane. The pain of the final severance would be less to Helen, and she would be more unrestrained. Helen had consented to all that the disinterestedness and clear-sighted kindness of her friend had proposed, and now the time was come.

"You will have to control yourself, my dear, with very great care," Madame Morrison had said on parting with Helen the day before, "because, though we shall not say so to these people, it is well they should be left to suppose that you are acting on instructions from Mr. Lisle."

"I will do all you tell me," Helen had said, in the tone of humility and gratitude that was so touching to Madame Morrison; "but Delphine will never believe that. She knows me too well, and she has watched me too closely."

Helen was perfectly right in this forecast. Delphine did not in the least believe in the implied version of the proceedings which took herself and her mother so much aback.

When Helen locked the door of her bedroom, and sat for hours writing, or trying to write, and crying, with her face laid on her extended arms, in many forlorn intervals of that agonising time, Delphine was perfectly aware of the nature of her occupation, and she interpreted the whole situation with a surprisingly near approximation to the truth, considering how limited was her actual information, and yet with a characteristic perversion of motives.

"These English people have decided her to break with the lover," she said to herself. "They are rich, and they have, perhaps, found a match for her. So much the better. She is stupid—ah, *mon Dieu*! how stupid she is!—and even if he did come back to her, it would not be for long. I hope he will come back, and that I shall see him, for I want to be quite sure that he is the monsieur of the Louvre. And where are

they taking her to? That I shall easily find out. This stiff English lady, and the cold ugly miss, who never looks at one, they are a triste exchange for a lover, even if he does play one some tricks, and keep one waiting for a long time. My faith! if she was not so stupid she would not be persuaded by them."

Then Delphine, obeying Madame Morrison's directions—which Helen had backed in a timid hesitating way which inspired her attendant with the utmost contempt—while she arranged Helen's small wardrobe for packing, speculated upon what reward she might receive for her faithful maintenance of the secret that existed between herself and her young mistress. It was probably of but little consequence now. These English people, no doubt, knew about those other English people who had lived in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne; but still Delphine had kept the secret, and "*mademoiselle*" owed her something for that. On the whole, she had but a slender expectation that her discretion would be rewarded, for she knew well how small were Helen's possessions, and her own pilferings among these had not been inconsiderable. Supposing Helen were to give her a ring? To be sure, she could not wear it, but she might sell it, or exchange it for one that would fit a finger of her large brown dexterous hands. There was that pin with the glittering green wreath round the handsome head. Delphine coveted it extremely, but she did not hope for it. She had not failed to observe that Helen set great store by this pretty ornament, wearing it constantly, with all changes of her dress, and laying it on the table by her side at night. The pin was not among the articles which Helen silently collected and placed in the little salon, where two boxes stood ready to receive all her worldly goods. No doubt she intended to wear it in the simple dress she had selected for her journey. Helen was very silent; she took no notice of Delphine's attempts to draw her into conversation; she did not seem to be aware that two or three times, with apparent inadvertence, but real impertinence, and as a reminder, Delphine addressed her as "*mademoiselle*." She moved about, when her task of writing was completed, pale and abstracted, her brows knit, and her eyelids heavy with the weight of tears.

"If it was a joyful journey to meet the husband," said Madame Moreau to her daughter, "she would not have eyes all

red and puffed like that. I think, my daughter, there is no husband in the case, and she is just paid off."

"No, no," said Delphine, "those English people take her away. If it had been the doing of the monsieur, he would have given up the apartment. We shall see more of it yet."

The time was drawing very near; a note from Jane had warned Helen to expect her at a certain hour, and Delphine had not failed to notice that the paper was carefully placed in Helen's pocket so soon as she had read its contents. The rooms had the bare and disorderly look of a departure; the inventory had been duly taken; nothing but the closing of Helen's boxes remained to be done, when the event for which Delphine was waiting took place.

Helen called to her to bring the blue velvet bonbon-box (that in which Frank had placed his letter of welcome) to her bedroom, and Delphine saw that a large packet of letters, securely tied and sealed, lay on the table before her. She placed the packet in the box, locked it, and desired Delphine to place it in the largest of her trunks, to close both, and bring her the keys.

When Delphine returned, Helen was standing in the middle of the pretty little room, with the intent expression of one who is taking a consciously last look at a familiar scene.

"Put down the keys and come here," said Helen. Delphine obeyed. "You have kept the promise you made me," said her young mistress, "and I thank you. Perhaps I shall never see you again, Delphine, and I should like you to have kind thoughts of me. If I have ever been troublesome to you, it has been because I was not happy."

"I hope madame is going to be very happy now," said Delphine, who, being, like all other human beings, not altogether bad, was suddenly touched by the extreme gentleness and sweetness of the girl's speech and manner.

"I do not know. I want you to wear these—I know you like them—for my sake."

She opened her hand and displayed to Delphine's enraptured eyes a pair of gold earrings, very prettily worked, which she had constantly worn, but which Delphine had never thought of for a moment a fish of a kind that could possibly come to her net. A flush of unutterable delight spread itself over the French girl's dark handsome face, and she said with perfect sincerity, as she accepted the gift, that she

had no words in which to thank madame; that she would never forget her; and that, if at any time she could serve her, she would be happy to prove her devotion.

There was a strong movement of remorse in Delphine's heart at that moment; it went at least so far as to make her wish that her mother had not fleeced the unsuspecting young lady quite so mercilessly; and to have moved her to even vicarious penitence was something. But Helen knew nothing of all this, and with a few more gentle words she dismissed Delphine for the moment. All was ready, and with the anguish of her resolution and her action—and she could hardly believe in them even now—there was mingled an irresistible sense of relief.

A few minutes later Jane arrived, and in her face Helen read a warning to be cautious and composed.

The trunks were taken down and placed on the carriage, and Helen passed out of the door of the pretty little "home" that had witnessed such terrible pages in her life-history with a pale fixed face, but she shed no tears. She felt as though she had no more tears to shed; as though they had all been wept over the poor little letter that was lying in the drawer of the small table in the salon—the drawer that had held the "slice of their fortune," hers and Frank's, in the time of her day-dream.

Madame Morrison's prevision was justified. Moved, perhaps, by no more defined impulse than that of curiosity, the Moreaus had bethought themselves of taking the number of the carriage that was waiting for Helen, and before she appeared that number was inscribed on a bit of paper, and put safely away. The man and woman were all civility, as the former accepted the gratuity with which Jane accompanied her parting injunctions. These were that Moreau should hand to Mr. Lisle, or anyone representing him, the small sealed packet that she confided to his charge (it contained the key of the table-drawer), and which would be applied for by herself on the day on which Mr. Lisle's tenancy of the apartment was to come to a termination, in the event of Mr. Lisle's making no appearance either in person or by deputy. The landlord was slinking about the door as Jane and Helen got into the carriage, and little as there was in his appearance to inspire confidence, they felt it was as well that he had overheard their commission to the concierge. Helen spoke not a word, and pulled her veil over

her face as Jane gave the order: "A la Gare du Nord."

CHAPTER XXV. HELEN'S LETTER.

"MADAME LISLE?"

The question was asked by a person who had stood for a moment irresolute at the open door of the lodge of the concierge in the house at Neuilly. Madame Moreau, busy with her needle at a little round table in the closely-draped window, had not looked up until a tap upon the glass door attracted her attention. The question followed immediately on the tap, and instead of replying to it by the usual mechanical intimation of the floor on which the apartment of the individual asked for was situated, she rose, came to the door, where she could distinctly see the questioner, and answered:

"She is no longer here."

"No longer here! Where is she then?"

"I do not know."

Madame Moreau was looking very sharply at the speaker, with a puzzled expression of countenance as if she were not quite sure of his identity, and this seemed to irritate, as much as the words she had just spoken confounded, him. He asked her testily what she was staring at, adding that she must be perfectly aware that he was Monsieur Lisle.

Madame Moreau's servile manner was adopted on the spot. She regretted infinitely, but the fact was that Monsieur——

"Never mind about me," said Mr. Lisle, stepping over the threshold and taking a seat uninvited, very much with the air of one unable to stand; "that is of no consequence. Tell me about Madame Lisle. When did she leave this? When does she return?"

Madame Moreau's dull face was not so dull but that Mr. Lisle could read in it the unfeigned and exceeding surprise with which these queries inspired her. She had almost had time to forget the profitable lodger whom it had been so easy to cheat, and whose departure had been accomplished in so rapid a manner, and with so little satisfaction to the curiosity of herself, her husband, and Delphine. But here was a savoury aliment supplied to dormant curiosity: the husband or the lover, whichever he might be, knowing nothing about the lady, coming there to ask for her—there was no doubt now that Delphine was in the right; the English people had taken Madame Lisle away, she had not been "paid off." Madame Moreau

had very little to tell. Madame Lisle left the house between two and three weeks ago, but she had said nothing at all about coming back; indeed she had hardly spoken to Madame Moreau at all; it was the other lady who gave the orders.

"The other lady? What other lady? Of whom are you speaking?"

"Does not monsieur know? An English lady, very dry in her manner, very short of speech. She came back with madame one Sunday that madame had been out for a long time, and two days after it was made known that madame was going away, to join monsieur they all thought, until the last."

"And why did you think otherwise then?" asked Mr. Lisle quickly.

"Because the young lady, the other, left a little packet for monsieur, and that had not the air as if she expected to see him herself."

"A little packet for me! Where is it? Let me have it at once."

"Very sorry, monsieur, but I cannot. It was confided to the care of Moreau, the most exact of men, and he locked it up in the bureau which monsieur sees there in the corner. He is gone out for the moment, and has the key on him. But he will return immediately, and if monsieur chooses to go up to the apartment I can accompany him. Monsieur will find everything in good order; the windows are opened every day."

"No, thank you; I will wait here for your husband's return, if you will allow me. In the meantime, tell me, as exactly and as fully as you can, all about the departure of Madame Lisle."

Putting a strong constraint upon himself, patiently following the confused and tautological narrative of Madame Moreau, and adding to it such fragments of knowledge as he possessed, Mr. Lisle arrived at a conclusion not very far removed from the truth. Helen had broken her promise to him; under the pressure of suspense and loneliness she had gone to her friend—he could not recall the name now, but it would be very easy to ascertain it—and imparted the circumstances to her. Her friend had taken Helen away with her free will, of course; it would not have been possible otherwise; and with this reflection, angry resentment replaced the first shock of disconcerted surprise with which he had heard of Helen's departure. Then a word of Madame Moreau's struck him; she was alluding to Helen's illness. He questioned her, and learned that she had been ill at the house of the English lady. Madame Moreau did not know where the

English lady lived, nor who the younger lady was, the one who took Madame Lisle away with her—to London, she supposed.

"To London!" said Mr. Lisle with evident discomposure. "How do you know?"

"It was written on the trunks," said Madame Moreau; "and the other lady told the cocher to drive to the Gare du Nord."

This intelligence was bewildering to Mr. Lisle. Helen's friend certainly lived in Paris; with what intent could she then have taken her to London? Could it have been someone else who had come to her aid? Mrs. Townley Gore herself, by any wonderful chance? Or had this meddling friend persuaded Helen to go to London with her, and replace herself under care of her former protectors?

As these alternative suppositions presented themselves to the mind of Mr. Lisle, he became exceedingly red and uncomfortable.

In either of the two cases he would find himself in a very unpleasant position, one considerably worse than that which he had expected to have to face on his return to Paris, after his long and unexplained absence.

He got up and walked about in the narrow space of the lodge of the concierge, wholly regardless of the suspicious appearance of such agitation on his part, combined with his ignorance of the actions of the lady whom he called his wife.

"Yes, there's no doubt about it; she said the Gare du Nord," repeated Madame Moreau, and then she added: "But, hold, here is Moreau himself, he will tell monsieur the same."

Moreau entered the lodge, and saluted Mr. Lisle, but he, too, looked at him with something of uncertainty, which seemed strangely irritating to that gentleman.

"Pardon, but it is that monsieur——"

Mr. Lisle interrupted Moreau just as he had interrupted Moreau's wife.

"Yes, yes, never mind. You have a packet for me. Where is it?"

Moreau exchanged looks with his wife; but a quick nod from her made him understand that he was to ask no questions, and he proceeded at once to search his pockets for the key of the bureau.

"That is the packet the lady left for monsieur," he said, handing the little parcel to Mr. Lisle, who instantly broke the seal, and found a key enclosed in a small pasteboard tube that had once contained a bottle of homœopathic medicine. A little slip of paper, bearing the words,

"Money-drawer," in Helen's writing, was attached to the key.

The concierge and his wife kept silence while Mr. Lisle looked at the key, and examined the paper in which it had been wrapped, but on which he found nothing written. Presently he said:

"If you will come and open the door, I will go up now, if you please," and he led the way up the general staircase.

In a few minutes Madame Moreau came down, and related to her husband all that had passed during his absence. They laughed, and shrugged their shoulders, and wondered what monsieur would find above there—who could have thought there was only a key in the little packet? and agreed that it was a droll thing, and these were droll people, though not bad to have to do with, and that it was droll in particular to discover that it was not monsieur, after all, but madame who had "taken the key of the fields."

When Mr. Lisle found himself alone in the little apartment, he looked about him with a shrinking uncertain glance. Were there ghosts in the place, that might look out at him in broad daylight from the stiff folds of the window-hangings, or the smooth surface of the mirrors that had reflected Helen's face through the long hours of her unrelieved suspense? He made a hasty inspection of the empty rooms, and then, returning to the salon, flung himself wearily into a fauteuil, and clasping his hands behind his head, with a deep impatient sigh fell a-thinking.

There was something strange about Mr. Lisle's way of taking the utterly unexpected intelligence of Helen's departure. It did not denote either violent grief, anger, disappointment, or anxiety. It was rather the attitude of a great and pressing perplexity; there was neither the anguish of love nor that of fear in it. With what feelings, what thoughts, what intentions, had he returned to Paris? It was clear that he had expected to find Helen in the place where he had left her, but that was the only thing that was clear in the matter. And now, whatever might have been his purpose or his mood, the one was put to the rout, and the other was changed, by an event so unforeseen that he was entirely at a loss how to take it, and there was over him a strange incapacity, both physical and mental, to calculate and avert its consequences. Even as he sat there thinking, he dozed off to sleep, and awoke presently, with a start, to remember the key. He

had left it, with his hat, in the vestibule, and he staggered as he rose to go for it.

He looked about for the little writing-table, unlocked and pulled out the drawer. At the back of it lay a sealed packet, containing the pocket-book which he had placed there. In the pocket-book was a letter, and the pin with the head of Apollo, encircled with laurel, Frank Lisle's first gift to Helen Rhodes, also the mock wedding-ring, his second.

"If you ever come back to enquire what has become of me," Helen had written—"for they tell me I need not fear that you are dead—you will be glad to know that I am with my good friend. I did not disobey you by going to her, though my distress was very great, and I was very lonely; she saw me accidentally, and she would not leave me. It is her good aunt, who offered me a home when my father died, that has made me understand the wrong thing I have done, and has enabled me to undo it, so far as any wrong thing can be undone in this world. Perhaps it was because you also did not know how wrong it was, and have found it out, that you have stayed away, meaning me to learn it by this means; if so, it is well, though it has made me suffer a great deal, and I shall yet be able to thank you. I know now that you could never respect me, and I should dishonour my father's name if I did not go away at once. I shall be safe, and no one will be troubled about me. I have done so wrong, though I did not know it, that I do not deserve ever to be happy. Where I shall be placed, or what will be my occupation, I do not know; but there will be no need for you to reproach, or disquiet yourself on account of me. You must try and forgive me for being so ignorant and so selfish; for I was both when I led you to pity me so much, that you did what was wrong for my sake. I am sure it was for my sake, and you must forgive me now and forget me. I am not helpless and deserted, though I am very, very miserable. But that is my own fault. I could not let my friends help me, as they will do, without telling them everything; and so I have told them that it might injure your friend, and would certainly displease you, to have your name mentioned to Mr. and Mrs. Townley Gore. I have their promise that it never shall be mentioned. My secret and yours will be faithfully kept; and if Mr. Townley Gore ever makes any enquiry for me, he will be told that I am

in my friends' charge. The false pretext, for which she has forgiven me, will be the truth. You see, there is no reason why you should ever take any thought for me. I will not write more, for this is all that I am bound to say, and I might write for ever without saying what there is in my heart. Only one thing more I must say. Even if you have not acted from the motive I have imagined—indeed, no matter what the cause of your conduct may be—I would not condemn you, if I could be made to know it. The fault was all mine—all mine. I trust the penalty may be."

Mr. Lisle read this letter through twice over, and then sat for some time thinking over it. This, then, was the explanation. These officious women had enlightened the girl's mind, to a certain extent at any rate, having jumped to the conclusion that his motives and intentions were of the worst kind, as your very pious people are apt to do when the children of wrath are in question. And she had not indeed taken in all their meaning—her letter made that plain—but perceived the truth sufficiently to be rescued from the danger, while still investing him with a remnant of the halo of her pretty and ingenuous fancy. Mr. Lisle anathematised the canting insolence of Helen's friend and her aunt, as freely as if they had inflicted on him the grossest injustice by their suspicions, and his motives and intentions had been of the loftiest kind, and as emphatically as if the action to which those suspicions had led had not happened to fit in with his own private wishes and convenience at that particular time.

He was as angry with Helen for having been persuaded to free herself from the snare which he had set for her, as if he had not been in his secret soul disgusted with his own folly for having incurred so much additional embarrassment at a critical moment in his life, and inwardly conscious of an immense relief in the knowledge that she had escaped. But the vagaries of pride and the promptings of vanity are past enumeration, and profitless to analyse. Both pride and vanity were in arms in the case of Mr. Lisle, and for a while they prevailed over the other forms of selfishness in him. It was, seemingly, not good for him to be strongly moved by any passion just then, for his colour varied strangely, and when he rose abruptly, as if under the impulse of some stinging thought, and walked about the room, his gait was unsteady.

Whatever the cause of his abandonment of Helen had been, by what circumstances determined and accompanied, absence had deprived her of her charm for him.

He was not untouched by her letter, but he was more angry than affected. There is such a possibility as that of finding certain difficulties smoothed away to the point of mortification, though, as his wrath somewhat abated, he derived considerable satisfaction from the passage in her letter that referred to Mr. and Mrs. Townley Gore.

"That certainly is uncommonly lucky," he said to himself, framing his thoughts in such familiar words as told of the assuagement of his first lofty wrath. "I got a great start when the idea occurred to me that she might have come in person after Helen, or that those sanctimonious meddlers might have taken Helen back to her prison; but that is all safe. Indeed, it all seems pretty safe, and considering what a fool I have been, I have not come off so badly."

At this point of his meditations, Mr. Lisle seemed to have recovered his temper and controlled his nerves; he glanced over Helen's letter once more, restored it, with the pen and the ring, to the pocket-book, which he placed in his breast-pocket, buttoned his coat, looked at himself in a glass with a critical air, put on his hat, and went down the staircase swinging the door-key on his forefinger.

Moreau had availed himself of Mr. Lisle's visit to the long-forsaken apartment to fetch the landlord, ready at hand in his garret close by, and when Mr. Lisle re-entered the lodge of the concierge he found the miser, in his invariable coffee-coloured suit of patched clothes, his dirty gaiters, and his greasy skull-cap, on the watch for him.

To this pleasing person Mr. Lisle handed over the key, telling him he might let the apartment that day if he liked; and then, having openly bestowed upon the Moreaus a gratuity, which the landlord eyed with a hungry glare eloquent of his longing to transfer it to his own pocket, was about to depart, when he bethought himself of the attendant whose services he had engaged for Helen. She might tell him some things it would be useful to know. He asked Madame Moreau where her daughter was, and whether he might see her; but Madame Moreau replied that her daughter was no longer at home. She

had got a very good place, only ten days ago, that of maid to a very fine and fashionable lady, and was gone to England. Hold, this was the lady's name; and Madame Moreau showed Mr. Lisle a name and address, written on a card stuck into the clock-case on the chimneypiece, remarking, "that, perhaps, monsieur might be acquainted with the lady."

Mr. Lisle obligingly glanced at the card, but he was not acquainted with the lady.

"I really should not have known him," said Moreau, when Mr. Lisle was gone, and the landlord had also retired, muttering "that the concierges had fine times of it, and that he wished he could be his own concierge."

"And I actually did not know him, for a minute," remarked Madame Moreau. "Ah, they are a droll lot, those English; they don't cry out before they are hurt, no, nor when they are hurt, neither. But, hold, there was one thing we did not tell him—that the young lady said she would come when the term is finished, in a week that will be, to see whether he had appeared and taken the packet."

"Yes, we ought to have told him that, but one cannot think of everything."

On the day after these occurrences, Frank Lisle left Paris, in the company of his friend Frederick Lorton, who was returning to England after a long stay abroad. The usually high spirits of the artist were a little dashed; his friend, who had but recently recovered from a severe illness, was feeble and peevish, and although no mood, either of his own or any other persons, could hinder Frank from seeing beauties in landscape, even when viewed by express train, and watching for bits of colour as they flew past, he felt too anxious to be as thoroughly happy as he was under most circumstances. How Frank Lisle's friend found himself advertised for in the Agony Column, and learned that the chief object of his journey was not to be realised, but that his own position was materially altered, has already been related. Frank Lisle was in high delight at his friend's good fortune, and during the remainder of the journey indulged in much speculation upon the future, but he derived his chief amusement from the reflection that he was about to be presented to the once formidable Mrs. Townley Gore, with, as he expressed it, "her teeth drawn."

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